

Chives

Allium schoenoprasum L.

Chives are a bulbous perennial herb used as an ornamental or as a culinary herb. Chives belong to the onion family and produce very attractive violet-colored flowers. They can be grown on most of the soil types found in Florida. It is attractive to pollinators. The tender chives leaves can be harvested at any time during the season and used fresh. The fresh, young, tender leaves possess a delicate onion flavor. The bulbs or dried leaves are seldom used as they do not have a pleasant flavor. Chives can be eaten in small quantities but the plant also has poisonous characteristics. The toxicity can depend on the age of the person or animal, the age of the plant, the part of the plant ingested, how much is ingested, whether the person or animal has sensitivities or allergies, whether it's eaten raw or cooked, and so forth. Consult with a medical professional for further details.

Type: perennial herb bulb

USDA hardiness zones: 3 through 10

Uses: culinary; border; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; naturalizing; accent

Origin: native to North America

Height: 12 to 18 inches **Spread:** 12 to 18 inches

Plant spacing: 12 to 36 inches

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun to part shade

Soil tolerances: slightly acid to alkaline; clay; sand; loam

Drought tolerance: good

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Invasive potential: low

Pest resistance: no serious pests or diseases; root rot may occur in poorly drained soil

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Photo: Photo: M Fletcher, NC State Extension